

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 065190
ORIGIN AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OPR-02 CU-02 /013 R

DRAFTED BY AF/W:DBEASUM/MPH
APPROVED BY AF/W:TWMSMITH
A/OS:CMAYBERRY (INFO)
-----240130Z 066188 /20
O 240041Z MAR 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

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FOR CROSBY FROM EASUM

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, ASCH, NI

SUBJECT: AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

REFS: LAGOS 3238 AND CROSBY/EASUM TELECON MARCH 22

1. I DISCUSSED AIS TENURE PROBLEM WITH GARBA BY TELEPHONE
TUESDAY EVENING MARCH 22. GARBA WAS SPENDING NIGHT IN NEW
YORK, WEATHER PROBLEMS HAVING GROUNDED HIS GULFSTREAM AIR-
CRAFT IN WASHINGTON.

2. I REMINDED GARBA THAT WE ATTACHED SUCH IMPORTANCE TO
AIS THAT I HAD INTENDED TO RAISE TENURE QUESTION WITH
OBASANJO DURING YOUNG MEETING LAST MONTH. I TOLD

GARBA THAT I HAD BEEN DISSUADED JUST PRIOR TO THAT MEETING
BY AMBASSADORS BALEWA, EDREMODA, AND MUSA, WHO HAD ASSURED
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ME THEY WOULD RESOLVE THE MATTER WITHOUT TOP LEVEL INTER-
VENTION. I HAD ACCEPTED THEIR ASSURANCES, BUT TOOK EXTRA
PRECAUTION OF BRIEFING ALLISON AYIDA LATER THAT DAY AND
GIVING HIM A COPY OF OUR AIDE-MEMOIRE ON THE MATTER.

3. I TOLD GARBA THAT WE UNDERSTOOD BARRACKS CONTRACTOR'S
OBLIGATION TO MEET HIS CONSTRUCTION DEADLINE. ON THE

OTHER HAND, I ASKED GARBA TO WEIGH THIS CONSIDERATION AGAINST THE LOSS OF YEAR'S ACADEMIC CREDIT FOR SEVERAL HUNDRED YOUNGSTERS REPRESENTING IMPORTANT NIGERIAN AND AMERICAN AND OTHER EXPATRIATE FAMILIES. I REMINDED GARBA THAT AIS STUDENTS ALREADY SUFFERING FROM MONTH FESTAC HOLIDAY IMPOSED BY FMG AND ACCEPTED BY AIS IN SPITE OF EVIDENCE THAT SOME OTHER PRIVATE SCHOOLS CONTINUED TO HOLD CLASSES DURING THAT PERIOD. I SAID IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO RECONCILE EXPULSION ACTION WITH PROFESSED FMG DESIRE SEE GREATER COMMITMENT TO NIGERIA BY FOREIGN AND PARTICULARLY AMERICAN BUSINESS AND INVESTMENT INTERESTS. BEING FORCED TO MOVE OUT WITH ONLY SIX WEEKS OF INSTRUCTION REMAINING UNTIL SCHOOL YEAR'S END WOULD BE SEEN AS EXTREMELY DISAPPOINTING AND PUZZLING DEVELOPMENT BY KEY MEMBERS OF AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY IN NIGERIA.

4. I TOLD GARBA OUR ONLY ALTERNATE FACILITY FOR THE SCHOOL PENDING POSSIBLE EVENTUAL CONSTRUCTION ON THE NEW VICTORIA ISLAND SITE, WAS A MOBIL APARTMENT BUILDING THAT WOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE UNTIL THIS SUMMER.

5. GARBA SAID HE HAD WORKED ON THIS PROBLEM IN RECENT MONTHS, HAD SUPPORTED OUR POSITION, AND THOUGHT THE MATTER HAD BEEN RESOLVED IN OUR FAVOR. HE WAS PUZZLED OVER HOW THE MATTER COULD HAVE GOTTEN UNSTUCK, SAYING "WHY SUCH A FUSS OVER SIX WEEKS--THE CONTRACTOR SHOULD GIVE WAY." GARBA SAID HE WOULD TAKE UP THE MATTER IMMEDIATELY UPON HIS RETURN TO LAGOS. HE ASKED THAT YOU CONTACT HIM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE FOLLOWING HIS RETURN, WHICH WE ESTIMATE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SHOULD BE THURSDAY OR FRIDAY. IF YOU SENSE IN YOUR MEETING WITH HIM THAT THIS IS ANOTHER OF THOSE SITUATIONS IN WHICH MEA'S BEST EFFORTS ON OUR BEHALF ARE APT TO BE FUTILE IN FACE OF LESS FRIENDLY AND MORE POWERFUL ELEMENTS IN SMC, YOU MAY WISH SUGGEST TO HIM THAT YOU WOULD BE PLEASED TO PRESENT AIS CASE DIRECTLY TO YAR'ADUA OR TO HEAD OF STATE. GOOD LUCK.

VANCE

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